

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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-----035665 061317Z /46

O 061132Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
TO USICA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4166  
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS BANGKOK 13014

E.O. 11652: N/A  
SUBJ: THAI MEDIA REACTION--MONDALE BANGKOK VISIT ENDS

USICA FOR EA, PGM/RC, VOA/PF, PGM/P, PGM/RM/PR

1. CONCLUSION OF VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S BANGKOK VISIT, PARTICULARLY HIS ERAWAN HOTEL NEWS CONFERENCE MAY 5, IS GIVEN FRONT-PAGE HEADLINE TREATMENT MAY 6 IN ALL BANGKOK ENGLISH AND CHINESE-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS. COVERAGE WAS EXTENSIVE AND POSITIVE, AS IT WAS ON NATION-WIDE RADIO AND TELEVISION. HOWEVER, NEWSMEN FROM THAI-LANGUAGE MORNING PAPERS BOYCOTTED THE NEWS CONFERENCE TO PROTEST SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AT DIN DAENG REFUGEE TRANSIT CENTER AND THE ERAWAN HOTEL. THIS WAS REPORTED PROMINENTLY IN THE EIGHT THAI-LANGUAGE MORNING NEWSPAPERS.

2. FOLLOWING IS TYPICAL EDITORIAL COMMENT:

3. THAI RATH COMMENTS ON THE SIGNING OF THE RURAL HEALTH LOAN AGREEMENT DURING MONDALE'S VISIT. WHILE SOME U.S. AID AGREEMENT PROJECTS ARE BEING CARRIED OUT, "THAILAND'S REQUESTS FOR HELP HAVE BEEN RESPONDED TO ONLY A LITTLE, ESPECIALLY IN THE REFUGEE FIELD," EDIT SAYS, ADDING, "U.S. HAS SEEMED TO BE WILLING TO  
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RECEIVE ONLY QUALIFIED REFUGEES, SUCH AS DOCTORS. ENGINEERS, AND TECHNICIANS."

4. IT CONTINUES: "THAILAND MUST NOT EXPECT ONLY TO RECEIVED, BUT MUST TRY ITS BEST TO BECOM SELF-SUFFICIENT, BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN SEEN THAT THE LEVEL OF U.S. AID HAS FALLEN STEADILY."

5. ON THAI FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE EDIT CONCLUDES, "IT IS HOPED THAT ANY INTENTIONS EXPRESSED DURING THE U.S. VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT, AS WELL AS ANY AGREEMENT MADE, WILL NOT CAUSE OUR FRIENDSHIP WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES TO CHANGE, IF THE UNITED STATES REALLY WANTS TO COOPERATE WITH US AS FRIENDS."

6. MATICHON CRITICIZES PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK FOR "CHANGING HIS MIND" ABOUT AGREEING TO AN ASEAN NEUTRALITY ZONE FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH MR. MONDALE. INSTEAD, "HE INDICATES THAT HE AGREES WITH THE U.S. IN REVIVING ITS UGLY CABAL OF THE PAST--WAGING WAR."

7. THE PAPER'S EDITORIAL CALLS THE MANILA PACT AND THE THANAT-RUSK AGREEMENT "COMPLETELY COUTDATED AS MEANS OF SAFEGUARDING PEACE IN ASIA. PEACE MUST BE MAINTAINED BY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, NOT BY USE OF FORCE. THAILAND SHOULD ASK THE U.S. TO RESPECT NEUTRALITY IN THE REGION RATHER THAN TO ASK IT TO CONFIRM ITS COMMITMENTS UNDER THOSE TWO AGREEMENTS," EDIT CONCLUDES.

8. THE REAFFIRMATION OF AMERICAN COMMITMENTS TO SOUTHEAST ASIA IS NOTED BY THE PRO-PEKING CHINESE-LANGUAGE DAILY CHUNG HUA JIT PAO. THE PAPER'S UNCLASSIFIED

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EDITORIAL SAYS THE MONDALE TRIP AND THE VICE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS CANNOT BE IGNORED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE "LACK OF IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE SOVIET UNION."

9. THE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE BANGKOK POST REGARDS THE RE-AFFIRMATION OF THE MANILA PACT AND THE THANAT-RUSK AGREEMENT AS SHOWING THAT THE U.S. "IS CREEPING OUT OF ITS SHELL AFTER HAVING BEEN FRIGHTENED OUT OF SOUTHEAST ASIA BY THE VIETNAMESE DISASTER."

10. THE EDIT CONTINUES, "ALTHOUGH MR. MONDALE'S STAY WAS BRIEF, IT AWOKE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE UNITED STATES DOES HAVE A VITAL SECURITY INTEREST IN THAILAND MAINTAINING ITS INDEPENDENCE. ALTHOUGH AMERICAN MAN-POWER IS NOT BEING CALLED UPON TO SERVE HERE, THIS DECLARATION IS A DETERRENT TO WOULD-BE AGGRESSORS."

11. AMERICAN APPROVAL OF THE SALE OF F-5E JET FIGHTERS TO THAILAND AS ANNOUNCED BY MR. MONDALE SHOWS "THAT HIS GOVERNMENT MEANS BUSINESS," EDIT DECLARES.

12. EDIT CONCLUDES, "THE AMERICAN APPROVAL OF ASEAN AND THAILAND'S ROLE IN MAKING IT A MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY AND THE AGREEMENT TO RAISE THE LEVEL OF PROPOSED U.S.-ASEAN TALKS IN WASHINGTON LATER THIS YEAR TO A MINISTERIAL LEVEL ARE POSITIVE SIGNS THAT THE UNITED STATES IS READY, WILLING AND ABLE TO JOIN WITH THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES IN MAINTAINING PEACE AND FREEDOM IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD."

13 THAI-LANGUAGE PRESS, IN ITS CRITICISM OF ARRANGEMENTS AT REFUGEE CENTER AND PRESS CONFERENCE, CLAIMED THEY WERE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BY NOT HAVING SPECIAL PASSES TO MOVE ABOUT FREELY IN THE CENTER COURTYARD OR TO ACCOMPANY VICE PRESIDENT'S PARTY TO UNCLASSIFIED

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THIRD FLOOR OF CENTER (NOTE: RTG OFFICIAL IN CHARGE OF SELECTING FIFTEEN THAI FOR THIRD FLOOR POOL COVERAGE HANDED OUT SPECIAL PASSES ON FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVE BASIS). ONE MAJOR PAPER CLAIMED A WOMAN REPORTER WAS SHOVED BACK INTO THE AREA RESERVED FOR PRESS BY AN AMERICAN SECURITY OFFICER. AS REGARDS PRESS CONFERENCE, NEWSPAPERS PROTESTED BODY SEARCHES BY THAI SECURITY.

14. TYPICAL COMMENT WAS A THAI RATH COLUMN WHICH, WHILE WELCOMING THE FACT THAT THE U.S. WILL TAKE "25,000 INDOCHINESE REFUGEES PER YEAR FOR MANY YEARS FROM THAILAND SO THAT THIS COUNTRY WILL BE GREATLY RELIEVED," FOCUSES ON THE REFUGEE CENTER INCIDENT. THE INCIDENT, COLUMNIST SAYS, "ONLY REDUCES, NOT INCREASES FRIENDSHIP. YES, THE TWO-DAY VISIT OF WALTER F. MONDALE CREATED A LOT OF NEGATIVE IMAGES FOR THAI NEWSMAN."

15. WHILE PRESS CONFERENCE COVERAGE IS ABSENT FROM THE THAI-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS, THEY DID RUN PHOTOS OF THE MONDALES WITH THE KING AND QUEEN, AT THE OFFICIAL DINNER WITH KRIANGSAK, AT THE REFUGEE CENTER, AND OF MRS. MONDALE'S ACTIVITIES. MCGINLEY

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